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THE CONCEPT OF THE INTERNET PLATFORM BUSINESS MODEL FOR COOPERATION FOR THE MARITIME CULTURE IN SZCZECIN

Review

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Abstract

The purpose of this article is to present the concept of the internet platform business model designed for cooperation for maritime and sailing culture. The task of this platform will be the integration of different groups of stakeholders involved in the creating and sustaining maritime and sailing culture. It'll be also a place of cooperation between the cultural and business sector for the implementation of the objectives of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in the area of promotion and dissemination broadly understood maritime culture in this region. The internet platform for cooperation for the maritime and sailing culture would enable undertaking activities in the area of creating and cultivating the city's tradition, as well as activating and integrating the local society around the broadly understood maritime and sailing culture. While conducting the research, the survey method and the Business Model Canvas method were used.

Keywords: *internet platform, maritime and sailing culture, corporate social responsibility*

1. INTRODUCTION

SZCZECIN - the capital of the West Pomeranian region, is a city located in the north-western part of Poland at the mouth of the Odra River to the Szczecin Lagoon. Szczecin has quite a specific characteristic that results from its historical and geographical conditions. The city was founded by the Slavs at the turn of the seventh and eighth centuries. The lands on which Szczecin and the West Pomeranian region are currently located over the centuries were under the control of many different nations in different periods of time. Historically, this place was associated with the local dynasty of the Griffin princes - hence the griffin in the coat of arms, but Szczecin also belonged to the Danes, the Swedes, the Hanza trade association, Prussians, French and Germans for some time. It was also inhabited by Jews, Russians, Czechs, Greeks and Ukrainians. Each of these nations had a share in creating a specific cultural and social climate of this place.

A very important event that influenced the specificity of the city was the inclusion of Szczecin and areas to the east of the Odra and Nysa Łużycka to Poland after World War II. In 1945-47, there was an increased migration movement - the German population was displaced (at the beginning of July 1945 in Szczecin lived 83765 Germans and 1578 Poles (Encyklopedia, 1999, p.557-561), and in 1947 only 4000 Germans), Szczecin inhabited the immigrant population from

Poland, especially from Warsaw, Krakow and Lodz provinces, as well as Poles resettled from the eastern territories seized by the USSR (Konarska-Michalczyk, 2017, p.38).

In this relatively young - in comparison to other areas of Poland - region, there is practically no indigenous population. The immigrant population in the areas displaced by the Germans created in the West Pomeranian region a population consisting of many different cultures, traditions, customs and national and ethnic identifications (Konarska-Michalczyk, 2017, p.38). This population for many years did not identify with Szczecin. It did not have a common identity and tradition that would connect it with the city. This is confirmed by the latest study which was carried out in 2016 by Terelak and Kołodziejczyk (Terelak and Kołodziejczak, 2017, p.51-62) on the image of Szczecin in the awareness of its inhabitants, analyzed from the perspective of rooting in the city. The problem of a weak bond and a specific local identity in Szczecin was also emphasized by Jałowiecki and Szczepański, pointing to the limited social ties of the inhabitants (Jałowiecki and Szczepański, 2002). P. Kubicki (Kubicki, 2016, p.316-331), in turn, drew attention to the fact that the society of Szczecin never coped with the *"myth of a migrant in an unwanted city"* and that is why the inhabitants of Szczecin lack emotional connections with the city.

According to Malikowski and Pokrzywa, *"an important determinant of territorial identity is the existence of emotional ties with a given territory, landscape, as well as people inhabiting this territory (territorial collectivity, local community) and products of material and spiritual culture, symbols belonging to a given territory, and thus with the material as well as the spiritual cultural heritage of the area."* (Malikowski and Pokrzywa, 2010, p.118) What shapes the identity of Szczecin and its inhabitants, as previously mentioned, is its turbulent past, which left many traces of the past of this place. They are permanent elements of social reality, largely responsible for shaping the identity of the current city hosts (Kokiel and Cegiełka, 2012, p.136).

What, in that case, could be a link between such a different population of Szczecin in many respects and ensure its emotional ties with the city?

According to the author of the article, due to the geographical location of Szczecin and its historical functional and spatial structure - associated with the port and water - such a link could be widely understood maritime and sailing culture.

The article discusses issues related to the maritime and nautical character of the city, maritime and sailing culture and the potential of the city in this area. The results of surveys concerning the opinions of the inhabitants of the city and the region on their expectations regarding taking initiatives related to maritime and sailing culture are also presented. An important problem in the creation and promotion of maritime and sailing culture in the region among its inhabitants is the lack of a common level of cooperation in this area. Therefore, the main aim of the article is to present the concept of a business model of an internet platform intended for cooperation in the field of maritime and sailing culture. The web platform is to be a place of integration of various groups of stakeholders involved in creating and maintaining maritime and sailing culture. It is to facilitate the taking up and implementation of activities in the field of creating and cultivating the city's maritime traditions, as well as to contribute to the activation and integration of the local community around the broadly understood maritime and sailing culture. This platform is also to be a place of cooperation between the culture and business sector in pursuit of the objectives of corporate social responsibility (CSR) in the area of promotion and dissemination of maritime culture in the region. The article uses such study methods as: the method of analysis and criticism of the literature (sources), the monographic method, the survey method and the Business Model Canvas method.

2. MARITIME CHARACTER OF SZCZECIN

Szczecin, like London or Hamburg, is a port city located inland - about 68 km in a straight line from the Baltic Sea. Szczecin has been a port center since its foundation. Archaeological study indicates

that people were sailing at the mouth of the Oder already in the Stone Age. Here, great sailing trips started, tall ships arrived, the best ships and yachts were built, the city's great captains and sea people were connected. Also the shipbuilding industry, which after the collapse of Szczecin Shipyard experienced its crisis, have been rebuilding after many years. In Szczecin, many private companies related to the maritime industry are currently active. The city has been operating a seaport serving shipowners from around the world for years. It is the only Polish port with connections through the waterway into the depths of Europe, and with the Baltic Sea through the Szczecin Lagoon. It is also the home of the three maritime universities in the country - the Maritime University of Szczecin - educating high-class specialists. The city is associated with the port, the Odra River, the Dąbskie Lake, excellent conditions for sailing - thanks to the modernization and construction of new marinas and yacht ports, and the Tall Ships Races. The relationship between Szczecin and water is obvious to all Poles. Szczecin has always been connected with the port, water, culture and maritime tradition.

However, the potential of this city, rooted in its maritime character was unused for many years. There were no initiatives and activities in the city that would strengthen the bonds of the inhabitants with the city and which would contribute to mutual social integration. Actions around which it would be possible to build a common identity and tradition for future generations of residents of Szczecin and the region.

After many years of stagnation in the activities for the "maritime and sailing" of Szczecin, in 2008, on the initiative of the West Pomeranian region Sailing Association, the "Żeglarski Szczecin" [Sailing Szczecin] Social Committee (Rudnicki, 2008), was established, which drew attention to the necessity for the Szczecin authorities to undertake real actions for the city and its residents in this area. The Committee stressed the need to develop a vision of a maritime city, open to water, for sailing and sea culture and for the sea. It initiated the project for the creation of Aleja Żeglarzy [Avenue of Sailors] and the city marina. The "Żeglarski Szczecin" Social Committee also drew attention to the need to establish a Szczecin internet portal for the city of Szczecin and the construction of the Maritime Museum (Maritime Science Center).

"Aleja Żeglarzy" opened in 2013 - commemorating the people associated with Szczecin and their achievements - integrated into the rebuilt Odra boulevards and embankments - has become an attractive place for rest and meetings and an important attraction of the city. Also, the yacht port opened in 2015 - located in the very center of the city on two islands: Łasztownia and Wyspa Grodzka currently shows the residents of Szczecin and tourists of the city and Szczecin connections with the sea and preserves the maritime traditions of West Pomerania.

A very important element building the identity of the new generations of Szczecin with the city and its history is the Szczecin Program of Water and Sailing Education - "Sea of adventures - with wind in sails" established over 20 years ago. It is an urban educational program that was and is the only such a large, maritime educational initiative in the country. The program is open, addressed to all types of schools and educational institutions, at which School Maritime Education Teams have been established - from pre-schools to upper secondary schools, educational care centers and special facilities. The detailed material scope of the Program includes various projects related to water and sailing education of children and youth, including:

- workshops and competitions in the basics of knowledge about sailing and the sea;
- art, literary, photography and stage competitions;
- practical water and sailing training and yachting cruises for students and teachers, Program winners.

In Szczecin, more and more activities are being undertaken to highlight the maritime and sailing character of the city and to emphasize the relationships of its inhabitants with the sea and sailing. However, there is still a lack of public involvement and manifestations of a greater initiative of the local community in shaping the image of the city.

3. ACTIVATION AND INVOLVEMENT OF THE INHABITANTS OF SZCZECIN IN MARITIME AND SAILING CULTURE

From the results of study conducted by R.B. Wozniak (Woźniak, 2012, p. 37-61) published in 2012. concerning the residents' life in the city space, their attitudes and behaviors, involvement in the city's affairs, shows that 74.2% of Szczecin residents surveyed think that *"the majority of residents are guided only by individual interest or at least the interest of their own family"*, and only 16.4% of respondents believe that *"the majority of residents have their own interests in mind, but at the same time try to be useful to the public, because it also brings them satisfaction"*. The study results presented indicate that, in the opinion of residents, very few individuals are involved in matters of public and social cooperation among Szczecin residents.

According to Kowalewski: *"(...) the identity of the city will be related to the degree of inhabitants' involvement in the process of co-creating its space, (...)"* (Kowalewski, 2011, p.7).

Migdalski's observation (Migdalski, 2017, p. 22) shows that representatives of the third (born after 1970), and especially the fourth (born after 1990) generation of residents who are no longer burdened with the ballast of the former residence of the family from before World War II, show the greatest and natural interest in Szczecin and the region. It is their place of birth and the place where they live. It can be said that it is these generations who feel today as real citizens of Poland. As for the shaping of the local identity, Migdalski's study show that it is mainly built thanks to the involvement of the conscious needs of such actions by individuals or groups of people from the second and third generation. They focus on a locality or idea, often associate in associations or informal groups (Migdalski, 2017, p. 22).

An example of such actions when it comes to representatives of the second generation of Szczecin residents are: previously mentioned initiatives taken by the Szczecin Sailing Committee. Other initiatives related to Szczecin's maritime and sailing culture include:

- JachtFilm Sailing Film Festival, held cyclically since 2016;
- "Sailing Gala" held cyclically since 2017, at which "International Szczecin Sailing Awards" are awarded;
- annual competitions of maritime knowledge, art, literary, photographic, stage, sea and sailing song competitions for children and youth, etc. - organized as part of the previously mentioned Water and Sailing Education Program.

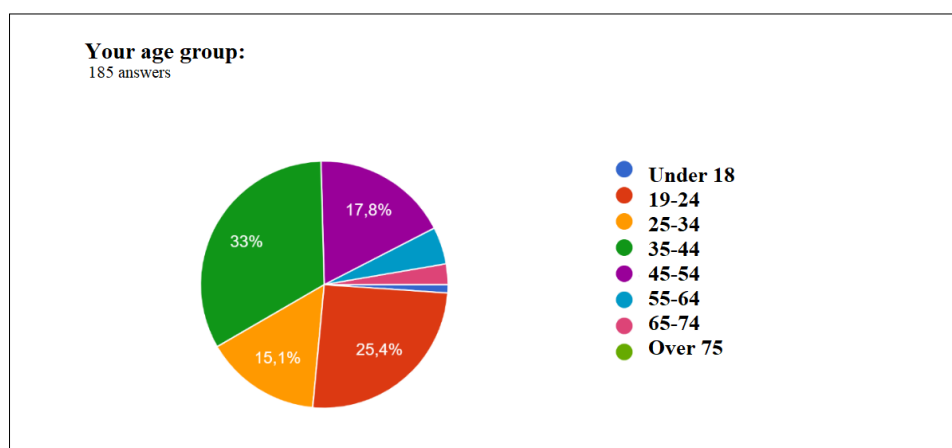
Regarding initiatives taken by representatives of the third generation of residents, an example of them can be activities carried out by the association "IGA'cki Band czyli Szczecińska Akademia Szantowa"¹. The association was founded in 2018, and the reason for its creation was the idea of acting for the musical promotion of maritime and sailing culture of Szczecin and West Pomerania, educating residents about the history related to the sailing and port nature of the city and the region. It also supports the band called IGA'cki Band, performing original sailing songs. The topic is people, events and stories about the maritime and sailing Szczecin and the region. Together with the association, the band undertook an initiative to promote this type of music due to the fact that there are no such songs about the region. The Association organizes regular music workshops for the inhabitants of the city and the region, teaching their songs about Szczecin and West Pomerania. Thus, it involves residents to actively participate in building a local identity related to the place where they live. These types of events contribute to the integration of the community and give the opportunity to meet and share experiences. It stimulates the inhabitants' activity and involvement in creating and cultivating Szczecin's maritime and sailing culture.

In the period from March to April 2019, the IGA'cki Band czyli Szczecińska Akademia Szantowa association conducted surveys among residents of the West Pomeranian region on the

¹ <http://igackibandsas.pl/wordpress/>

level of interest in events related to maritime and sailing culture and the expectations of respondents in Szczecin in the area of interest. The results of the surveys form the basis for the association's cultural offer in terms of respondents' expectations. The survey was posted on the internet and sent to various social groups through social media. 185 people participated in the survey.

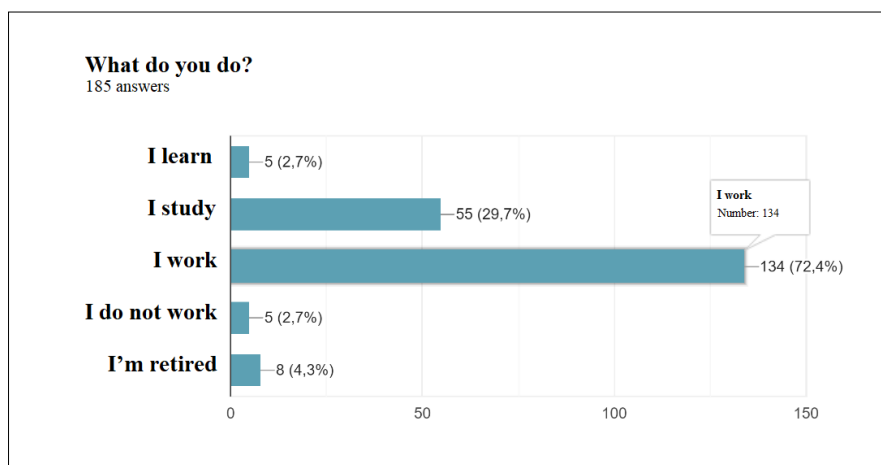
Out of all respondents, 49.2% were residents of Szczecin. The largest social group participating in the survey were people between 33-45 (33%) and those aged 19-24 (25.4%) (Figure 1).



Source: own study

Figure 1 Age of respondents

72.4% of the surveyed were working people, and 29.7% were studying (Figure 2).

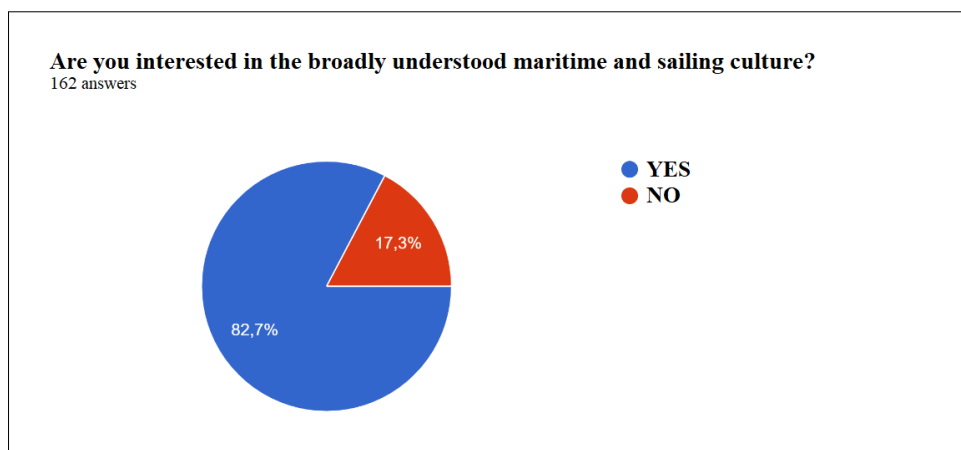


Source: own study

Figure 2 Current occupation

87.6% of respondents admitted that they take part in various cultural and sports events organized in Szczecin. Only 12.4% of respondents indicated that they did not participate in such events, and the main reason was lack of time (47.8%) and too poor offer (26.1%).

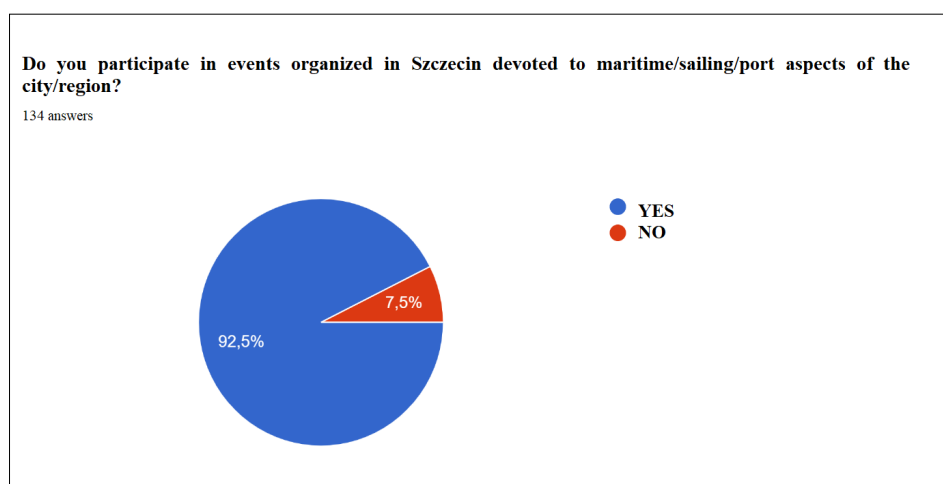
Of the 162 people declaring that they participate in various events organized in Szczecin, to the question: "Are you interested in the broadly understood maritime and sailing culture?" - 82.7% of respondents answered positively (Figure 3).



Source: own study

Figure 3 Interest in in the broadly understood maritime and sailing culture

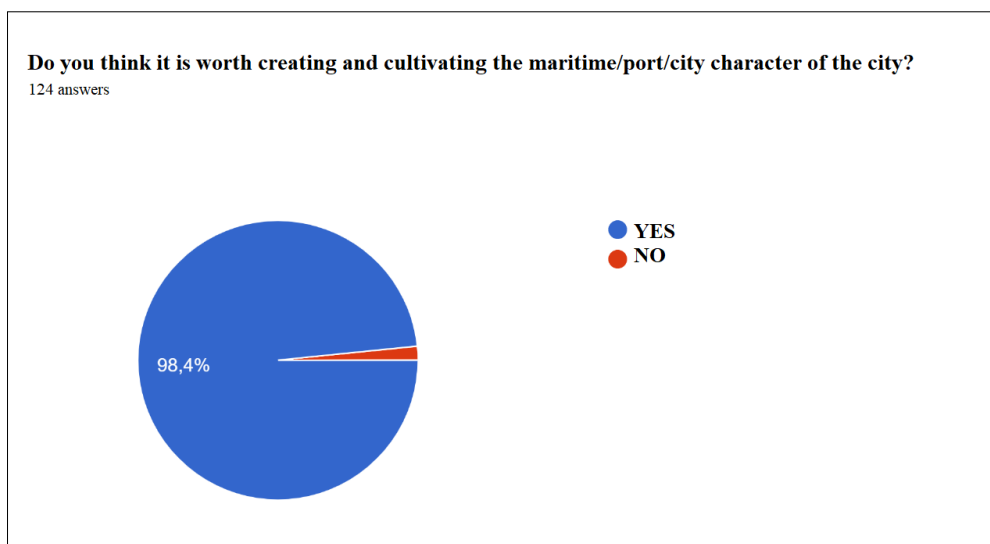
Of the 134 people interested in the broadly understood maritime and sailing culture, to the question: "Do you participate in events organized in Szczecin devoted to maritime / sailing / port aspects of the city / region?" (Figure 4) - 92.5% of respondents answered positively. In the group of respondents who do not participate in such events (7.5% of respondents), 70% of people - the main reason for the lack of participation in this type of events indicated no information about them.



Source: own study

Figure 4 Participation in events organized in Szczecin devoted to maritime/sailing/port aspects of the city/region

Of the 124 people who participate in events organized in Szczecin devoted to maritime/sailing/port aspects of the city/region, to the question: "Do you think it is worth creating and cultivating the maritime/port/city character of the city?" - 98.4% of respondents answered positively (Figure 5).



Source: own study

Figure 5 Creating and cultivating the maritime/port/city character of the city

To the question: "Do these events affect the shaping of the maritime/sailing/port character of Szczecin?" - the respondents answered "definitely yes" to:

- sailing competitions and races; sailing song and music concerts (79%)
- exhibitions devoted to maritime/sailing/port aspects of the city and/or the region (60.5%)
- Sea Days - Sail Szczecin (89.5%)
- Tall ships races (91.1%)
- celebrations related to the commemoration of events and people related to the maritime/sailing/portside aspect of the city and the region; film festivals devoted to maritime/sailing/port aspects of the city and/or the region (53.2%)
- competitions devoted to maritime/sailing/port aspects of the city and/or the region (58.1%)

According to the respondents, there are also no other events or activities that could positively affect the maritime/port/nature of the city in Szczecin, as well as the creation and maintenance of maritime and sailing culture and traditions (62.9% of respondents).

The respondents gave their proposals of events, which in their opinion are too few or missing, and which could positively affect the maritime/sailing character of the city, as well as influence the creation and maintenance of maritime and sailing culture and traditions. Out of the 40 proposals submitted by the respondents, 15 of them indicated the need to organize a nationwide festival/review of a sailing and sailing song in Szczecin. The respondents also pointed to too few concerts related to sailing music organized in Szczecin, and they noticed that there should be more such events throughout the year, and not only on the occasion of large mass events such as Sea Days - Sail Szczecin or sailing ships. Attention was also paid to the need to involve children, young people and older inhabitants of the region in learning about the history related to the maritime, port, sailing character of Szczecin and active participation in activities related to practicing water sports.

As the survey results show, the local society sees the need to identify with the maritime/sailing/port nature of the city and points to the need to intensify activities in this area. The conducted study also shows how important people in creating these activities are people who

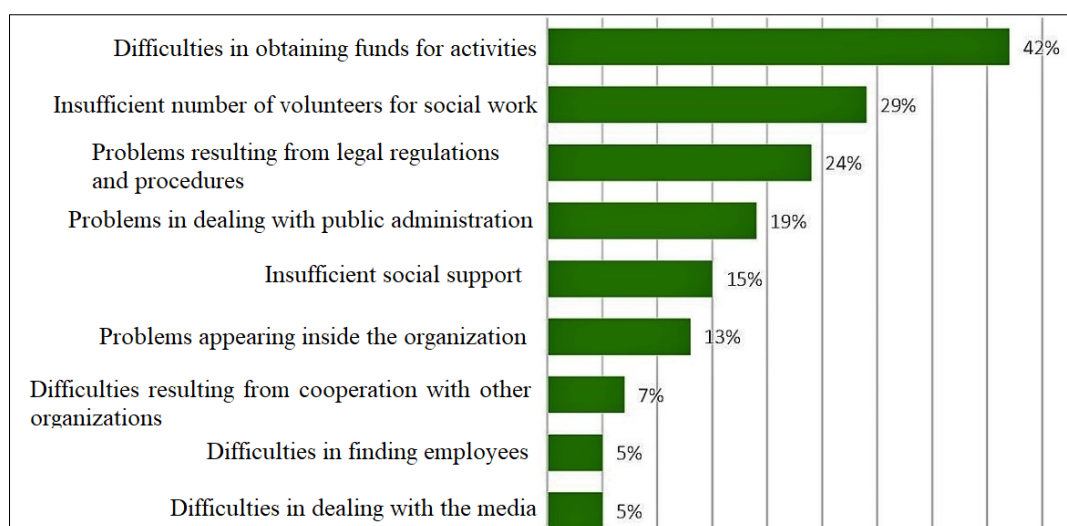
create maritime and sailing culture of the city. It is so universal that it allows you to build the identity of the city with which people identify.

4. INTERNET PLATFORM FOR COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF MARITIME AND SAILING CULTURE

On the example of observations and experiences of the IGA'cki Band czyli Szczecińska Akademia Szantowa association, we can also identify several key difficulties that most young non-governmental organizations working for the local community are facing. They coincide with the information collected in the governmental document attached to Resolution No. 104/2018 of the Council of Ministers of August 7, 2018 regarding the adoption of the program for supporting the development of civil society under the name "Program for the Development of Civic Organizations for the years 2018-2030 PROO". The barriers and problems most frequently reported by NGOs are presented in (Figure 6).

Difficulties related to ensuring the material functioning of the organization and obtaining and accounting for funds are, according to these surveys, the biggest problems of the non-governmental sector in Poland. The most important problem for third sector entities is limited access to financing their initiatives. The activities of associations are mainly based on grant projects. This causes competition between organizations in obtaining funds.

The consequence of this is the large dispersion of activities and their low effectiveness. In addition, from the previous experience of the IGA'cki Band czyli Szczecińska Akademia Szantowa association, it appears that the environment of similar non-governmental organizations dealing with issues of maritime and sailing culture does not know each other. This leads to the lack of implementation of joint projects that could be carried out by the wider community on a larger scale. This affects the perception by the local community of the activities of individual organizations as insignificant and of limited scope. The funding deficit also causes that initiatives in the field of maritime and sailing culture are not continuous, but come down to sporadic activities carried out "from one grant to the other".



Source: *Non-profit sector in 2014.*, GUS 2016 [acc. to:] *Program Rozwoju Organizacji Obywatelskich na lata 2018-2030 PROO*, p. 10; <http://bip.kprm.gov.pl/download/75/40496/uchwalaradyministrowwsprawieprzyjeciaprogramuwspieraniarozwojuspoleczenstwaobywa.pdf> [16.03.2019]

Figure 6 Percentage of non-governmental organizations by type of reported barriers and problems in conducting business in 2014

This, in turn, affects the perception of the organization by the public administration, as the business of unimportant partners to conduct continuous cooperation for the effective creation of a policy of corporate social responsibility (CSR).

Regardless of whether we are talking about reducing direct costs, increasing labor productivity, applying risk management, image enhancement, or improving environmental management, the importance and application of the CSR concept in the strategy and activities of various organizations is unquestionable. Increasingly, attention is paid to the role of business in society, as shown in studies on CSR practices exists (Wang and al, 2017, p. 111–117). Progressive companies are seeking to differentiate themselves more and more often through engagement in CSR. In studies on CSR, the relationship between CSR activities and benefits for companies was identified (Boubakary and Moskolai, 2016, p. 162–171). Regardless of whether we are talking about reducing direct costs, increasing labor productivity, applying risk management, image enhancement, or improving environmental management (Lungu and all, 2011, p. 117-131), the importance and application of the CSR concept in the strategy and activities of various organizations is unquestionable.

A sustainable business embraces community and stakeholder success. It holds its natural and cultural environments to be as precious as its technological portfolio and its employees' skills (Soundarya, 2016, p.40-43).

In order for enterprises from the region to include in their CSR policy measures to promote maritime and sailing culture - it is necessary to consolidate the activities of many dispersed organizations and make a joint offer of cooperation aimed at the business environment. The idea of creating an internet platform for cooperation in the field of maritime and sailing culture may contribute to the reduction of barriers and difficulties currently faced by non-governmental organizations operating in this area in Szczecin and the West Pomeranian region. The main goal of the platform is to integrate different groups of stakeholders involved in creating and maintaining maritime and sailing culture. It is to be a place of cooperation between the culture and business sector in pursuit of the objectives of corporate social responsibility (CSR) in the area of promotion and dissemination of broadly understood maritime culture in this region. The online platform is to facilitate the undertaking and implementation of activities in the area of creating and cultivating the city's traditions, on a larger scale than currently individual NGOs, as well as activating and integrating the local community around the broadly understood maritime and sailing culture.

The analysis of the study results presented in the article and individual in-depth interviews with representatives of associations and organizations dealing with maritime and sailing culture allowed the author of the article to formulate a business model proposal for an internet platform for cooperation in the field of maritime and sailing culture. The business model is a very popular method in science and practice. Identified by theoreticians as a priority for scientific recognition, in the sphere of helping management science for contemporary enterprises (Nogalski, 2011, p. 447) and organization is a practical tool enabling the description of the initiative from the perspective of its value increase and presentation of its operation, including designing the organization and management system (Okoń- Horodyńska, 2013, p. 12).

The proposal of the internet platform's business model for cooperation in the field of maritime and sailing culture presented in Figure 7 was built using the method of Canvas business modeling prepared by A. Osterwalder (Osterwalder, 2004). A. Osterwalder and Y. Pigneur have developed a canvas to carry out the business modeling process, the central point of which is the value proposition. According to their definition: *"business model describes the reasons behind the way in which the organization creates values and provides and derives profits from this generated value"*. (Osterwalder and Pigneur, 2012, p.18).

Business Model Canvas				
Project name: Internet platform for cooperation in the field of maritime and sailing culture				
8. Key partners Who are our key Partners? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• NGOs dealing with maritime and sailing culture - ideas, presentations of their activities and proposals for joint activities;• Informal groups dealing with maritime and sailing culture – as above + volunteers; Who are our key suppliers? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Local government units, central institutions managing programs and finances - information on the possibilities of financing cultural activities;• Sponsors / financing the functioning of the platform;• Sailing organizations (OZZŁ, PZZ – advertisers);• IT company - design, construction, platform administration.• Regional media (TV, radio, Press and thematic internet portals: INFOLUDEK, SZANTY24, wszeczinie.pl, szczecin.pl and others for spreading information about events, media coverage	7. Key Activities What Key Activities do our Value Proposition require? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developing concepts with partners and creating a platform model;• Developing and managing the platform;• Acquiring new partners / recipients;• Acquiring sponsors;• Promoting platform services;• Animating partner / recipient cooperation.	2. Value Proposition What value do we deliver to the customer? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A modern tool for establishing and developing cooperation of currently dispersed entities dealing with maritime and sailing culture;• Information in one place about entities dealing with maritime and sailing culture and their offer for recipients and the media;• Integration of the environment dealing with maritime and sailing culture in the region;• Information useful for entities dealing with maritime and sailing culture about programs and co-financing in one place	4. Customer Relationships What type of relationship do our Customer Segments expect? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Email contact and support• Personal meetings• Cyclical meetings with a group of partners,• Facebook - keep up to date on events on the platform, with a link	1. Customer Segment For whom are we creating value? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Local community• Sailors' community• Yacht ports and marinas• Cultural institutions (libraries, museums, cultural centers• Educational facilities at all levels (kindergarten primary, secondary and higher education) and educational care centers• Tourist organizations• Agencies, companies, organizational units and budgetary units of territorial self-government units dealing with the organization of cultural events
	6. Key Resources What Key Resources do our Value Proposition require? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mobile and responsive application• Knowledge and contacts in the environment and sailing and social Space on the server?• Financing under the project	3. Channels of reaching recipients (sales channels) Through which Channels do our Customer Segments want to be reached? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social media• Sailing organizations (OZZŁ, PZZ)• Tourist organizations• Yacht ports and marinas• Marine trade press• Facebook		
9. Cost structure What are the most important costs inherent in our business model? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Costs of purchasing a domain, building and operating the platform• Platform development (new functionalities)• Marketing (advertising of platform services) Which Key Resources are most expensive? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• An IT company that will create the application and platform Which Key Activities are most expensive? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Building and service of the platform		5. Revenue Streams <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grants• Advertiser fees• Sponsorship		

Source: own study

Figure 7 Internet platform's business model for cooperation in the field of maritime and sailing culture

This method allowed to describe key areas, identify clients, mutual relations and channels to reach them. Business Model Canvas (BMC) in the initial phase of the Internet platform project enabled the rapid creation of many different possibilities of its operation and the creation of as many ideas as possible about the value that can be offered to the recipient, the method of its delivery and the model of its financing. Thanks to the applied Business Model Canvas, it was possible to determine the proposal of the Internet platform business model for cooperation in the field of maritime and sailing culture with appropriately assigned priorities for the given system components.

The main advantage of the presented concept is its simplicity and transparency. Certainly, it should be noted here that the business model itself is not a tool that allows to fully manage the project. Depending on the complexity and purpose of the project, the analyzes should be prepared in the next stage (e.g. financial analysis, evaluation of potential partners, possible outsourcing, etc.). In the phase of planning and creating the concept of an online platform for cooperation in the field of maritime and sailing culture the Business Model Canvas allowed the authors to become aware of the key elements from which the proposed project is to be made of.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The multiplicity of individual lives of the inhabitants of West Pomerania and their ancestors means that - at least for now - there cannot be a more uniform social identity. They are rather numerous complementary identities that allow individuals and social groups to feel the hosts of individual homes, streets and districts. However, the history of the city and the region in which they live, its maritime, sailing and port character is the link that can integrate residents and make them identify with this place. For this purpose, activities on the part of the city and regional authorities as well as associations and non-governmental organizations aiming at activating the society to build their identity with the place where they live are necessary for this purpose. The article shows that maritime and sailing culture is the area that is part of the maritime character of the city and around which its identity should be built. It is also so universal that it will allow identifying people living here with Szczecin and the region. Due to the problems discussed by the NGOs in their activities for the benefit of the local community, including those dealing with maritime and sailing culture - the idea of creating an Internet platform for cooperation in the field of maritime and sailing culture is fully justified. The high popularity of online platforms used in various areas of life suggests that this kind of tool should be created. Assumptions related to the functionality of such a platform are the subject of further study.

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